

[Mrs. Lucinda Permien Holze]

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FOLKLORE.

Miss Effie Cowan, P.W.

McLennan County, Texas.

District 8.

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Interview with Mrs Lucinda Permien Holze, Riesel, Texas. (White pioneer)

"I was born in the year 1857 in Mechlenburg Germany. My father, Ludwig Permien, emigrated to America in the year 1871. He settled at the town of Fredericksburg Texas. When he was located he sent for my folks in the year 1873. By this time he had become a naturalized American citizen. The war between the states was over and the worst of the reconstruction days were past. But there were still some Indians in the western part of the state where we came.

"The country was mostly a stock and ranch country, but in between the hills there was timber and so they raised their grain in these valleys. When they took their stock and produce to the markets they went to San- Antonio, Austin and Brownsville. There was lots of Mexicans near our town and the German settlers employed them to clear the brush from

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the land they put in cultivation and to help herd the cattle. There were a very few slaves at this time in Gillespie [?] county . The settlers lived in log cabins and the schools and churchs also were the log houses.

“The schools were the one teacher schools and the teachers would board around with the families of their pupils, and the salaries were around twenty-five dollars a month. After I was grown I went to Austin and helped do housework for the white women. Then in 1879 I married Mr Frederick Holze and moved near the town of Brenham, Texas, to a little village named Industry. C.12 - 2/11/41 - Texas 2 “For many years my husband operated a little country store at this place. I have heard him tell about when he was a sixteen year old boy during the Civil War, how he was a teamster and drove the freight wagons from Industry to Brenham and on down to the nearest railroad. The wagon trains would go together to protect each other from the robbers. Sometimes when they were passing thro' the river bottom the robbers would take their wagon's with the freight and the team's the men would be gald to escape with their lives.

“I can remember when I lived in Austin how the rangers would be stationed over on the Concho river to watch for the Indians. They were still giving trouble, robbing the settlers of their stock and their grain. I can also remember the old court house in Austin. It was located down near the Colorado river, the course of the river ran thro' the city making a very picturesque picture with its large trees that bordered the banks of the river.

“When the river was on a rise we crossed on the ferry boats and when it was low it was easy to ford it as the bed of the river was rock. Sometimes in the spring it would get on a big rise and overflow the lowlands near the city, the people who lived in these places would have to move to higher ground. It was about the time I left Austin in 1879 that they built the new capitol.

“After I came to Industry, near Brenham , I was surprised to [???] see such large farms, they called them plantations, they were situated close to the river's, the Brazos and Little

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River, and many were called the 3 Bottom plantations. The soil was very rich and they often made a bale of cotton to the acre. There were so many more negroes. They had been slaves of the plantation owners and since their freedom they were working the land for their former owners and the owners giving them part of the crops for their work.

“The towns of Brenham and Industry are near Little River, as well as the Brazos , and sometimes it overflowed to, and the Santa Fe rail-road would be under water and the trains delayed for days at a time. The white people lived away from the bottom but the negro cabins were down on these plantations and it was common for the white people to have to go and bring them out in boats when the over-flow's occurred.

“In 1884 my husband brought his family to the German settlement near what is now Perry Texas. We owned a little store and he was post—master at a little place called Stamps. It was at this place that we had our experience with robbers, one afternoon as we were ready to close the store, two men rode up on horse-back, came in and asked for tobacco. As my husband turned to get it, they drew a gun on him and told him to give them all the money he had.

“At the same time the other one turned to me and told me that if I made a noise [?] that he would shoot me, then he turned to help the man who held the gun on my husband, rob the cash drawer and safe. When he did this I ran to a neighbor's and gave the alarm, but when the neighbor got there they had the money and were gone. We never did recover of our money or find the robbers. 4 “I will not attempt to give you the story of the German settlement at Perry, but there was a young man from Germany by the name of Von Holwegg who was among the colony that Mr Schlimbech brought over. This young Holwegg accumulated a large amount of property and made Mr Otto Rau his overseer. Mr Rau also was one of the first ones to come over from Germany with this colony. My son Louis married his daughter and after Mr Rau died , he took charge of this property and is the agent yet.

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"I have five living children, they are Mrs L.H. Schmidt- Riesel, with whom I make my home. Mr Louis Holze Waco. Mr E.J. Holze, Otto, Texas. and a daughter, Mrs A.L. Leifeste of Houston Texas. My husband passed away in 1918 at the age of sixty-nine years.

"Yes; I can give you a little of the history of the early days of some of the German communities in Texas before the Civil War came, as handed down to the descendents of those who were among the first settlers. It is said that in the spring of 1846 the first train for Fredericksburg, consisting of twenty wagons and some two-wheel Mexican carts, left the town of New Braunfels for the new settlement on the Pedernales. There were about 120 men, women and children in this train, accompanied by eight of the soldiers furnished by the "Society for the Protection of German Immigrants in Texas."

"After a trip lasting sixteen days they arrived at the future town of Fredericksburg. It is worthy of note that the meat for the first meal [?] served to them in this new location was bear [?] meat. John Schmidt, one of the military soldiers shot a bear on the banks of the Pedernales river. 5 "The immigrants passed a band of Indians just before they crossed the river and when they heard the shot from the rifle, they thought it was an Indian attack, but it was only the hunters shooting at the bear. Another soldier killed a panther just before they crossed the river, the timber here was dense and the animals were plentiful.

"A partial list of the first settlers has been kept, but the full list seems to have been lost since the county clerks records were destroyed by fire in 1850. Among the family names are Ahelger, Schmidt, Lochte, Bonn, Berbens, Schwars, Strackbein, Durst, Syeubing, Heinmann, Llein, Leydendecker, Eckhardt, Neffendorf, Theile, Schneider, Fritz, Weidenfeld, and Schnautz.

"It is a matter of record that the first school in Fredericksburg was organized by the " Society for the Protection of German Immigrants in Texas. " John Leydendecker held the school in the church building. When the first city school was organized in 1856 August Siemering was chosen as the teacher. By 1860 there were ten schools in the settlement

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around Fredericksburg and an enrollment of 260 pupils. In 1860 the number of white people in the country was around twenty-seven hundred thirty-three slaves and thirty-eight people in business.

“The first religious service for the German immigrants was held in the city of Houston in Dec. 1839 and in a short while there were regular services held for them in the city by a Mr [?] Evenderg who came to Houston from Illinois in 1839. In the year's 1840 to 1844 this Mr Evendberg and Mr Johann Anton Fisher organized Protestant churches in Industry , 6 Cat Springs Biegel, La Grange and Colombus. The Catholics also had churches in New Braunfels and Fredericksburg. The first mass was celebrated in New Braunfels by a priest named George Menzel, who in the same year built a cross on the Kreuzberg mountain, to the northwest of Fredericksburg to show / to the world the Catholic standard as a symbol of salvation and civilization.

“ he The first Methodist church rganized organized in Fredericksburg was in the year-1849 and Rev. Eduard Schneider organised it and held the services in the societies hall until 1855 when the congregation built a church house for themselves.

“On the eve of Whitsuntide the German's of Industry and Cat Springs organized a German order [?] under the leadership of Freiderich Ernst, which was to further immigration and correspondence between Germany and Texas and to preserve the German traits. To belong to this order the requisites were talent, ability and education. On March 1843 the members [?] showed their patriotism of Texas by celebrating the anniversay of [??] Texas Independence . After this there were organized various clubs and societies for the social life of the communities.

“In telling of the social life of the German people of that day my story would not be complete without telling you of the invisible passenger that came with these first families , and that was the talent for music as expressed both with instruments and in song. To the march across the wilderness of this state it accompanied them and helped them to win in

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their struggles against the hardships of the life of the pioneer[.] 7 “The first singing society in Texas was organized at New Braunfels in March 1850. It was called the “Germania.” Some of its first directors were Petmecky, C.F. Blum, Dr Adolf Douai, [?] and H. Guenther. Besides the Germania [?] two other clubs were organized at New Braunfels before 1861, they were [?] a chorus of men and women, one w s was called the “Concordia”. There was a quartette at Sisterdale composed of men nd and at Comfort there was a quartette composed of Ernst Altgelt, Fritz Goldbeck, C. W. Boerner and Fritz Holekamp under the direction of Hermann Schimmelpfennig.

“In August 1853 there was a state song festival (Staats- Saengerfest) with the above mentioned singing societies taking part together with others from San Antonio and Austin. There were four other state meetings before 1861 at New Braunfels and Fredericksburg, but when the Civil War was declared then the song festivals were ended for the duration of the war.

“The culture of the pioneer German people was also manifested in the art of painting, and what wonderful colors to raw draw their inspiration from! In the spring the Indscape landscape was brilliant with the wild flowers, the blue-bonnet, the Indian bl nket blanket with its coat of red, and the “Yellow Rose of Texas” - , (the song the confederate soldiers loved so well to march by.) as well as many other flowers of equal beauty.

“Hermann Lungkwitz was one of the most prominent of the landscape painters. His scene of Bear Mountain near Fredericksburg, the Pedernales River, Marble Falls on the Colorado and Waller Creek at Austin are among his best work. 8 “Two of Lungwitz's painting's hang on the walls of the south entrance hall of the State Capitol Building. One is that of David Crockett, and the other shows the surrender of Santa Anna to Gen. Sam Houston. The portraits to these painting's were done / by the artist Huddle, but the landscapes are the works of Hermann Lungkwitz.

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“To the success of the German settlements in Texas is due to a great extent to the “Society for the Protection of German Immigrants in Texas.” The immigrants came to Texas to escape oppression in their country and to enjoy the blessing's of liberty and the rights of citizenship. This they accomplished and at the same time their ways, customs and characteristics were preserved. “Then here's to our state, our own dear state, Right or wrong, oppressed or free; In poverty and wealth, enthroned or disowned, Our mother our [?] queen shall be. Oh! the Lone Star State our home shall be, As long as her rivers run into the sea.